

EXHIBIT C

Aileen Gonzalez - 6/17/2025

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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA

CASE NO.: 4:24-CV-10017

AKARI JOHNSON, ET. AL,

Plaintiffs,

vs.

MMI 82, LLC, ET. AL,

Defendants.

Tuesday, June 17, 2025

11:05 a.m. - 3:59 p.m.

DEPOSITION OF AILEEN GONZALEZ

Taken before KHALED ELMOUSSA, Court Reporter, a
Notary Public for the State of Florida at Large,
pursuant to Notice of Taking Deposition filed in the
above-styled cause.

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1 so that we didn't like miss payments.

2 Q Did you prepare financials?

3 A Like a P&L?

4 Q Yes.

5 A Yes.

6 Q Any other financials you prepared?

7 A Expense sheets basically.

8 Q There's also a bullet point in your LinkedIn
9 profile that says manage payroll accounting and invoice
10 processing, ensuring accuracy and expense control
11 within budget parameters. Did you run the payroll for
12 the hotel employees?

13 A Yes.

14 Q And you signed the checks?

15 A Yes.

16 Q Would you also sign other checks for vendors?

17 A Yes.

18 Q Did you sign all the checks that were
19 payments made by the hotel?

20 A Yes. Unless O'Neale signed.

21 Q What checks would O'Neale sign instead of
22 you?

23 A Sometimes he would come in and sign a bunch
24 of blank checks and then leave them with me.

25 Q Aside from those blank checks, he didn't sign

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1 A Yes.

2 Q With taking reservations and interfacing with
3 the customers?

4 A Yes.

5 Q How long were you in the swim position?

6 A Maybe six months.

7 Q Anyone else in a swing position?

8 A Everybody usually started out in the swing
9 position. So, that you became familiar with the hotel.

10 Q Was the same true for Hazel and Akari?

11 A Yes.

12 Q How many rooms does the hotel have?

13 A 16.

14 Q Is that why they referred to it as a boutique
15 hotel because of its small size?

16 A Yes.

17 Q And due to the size of the hotel, was it
18 common for employees to have a broad range of duties?

19 A Yes.

20 Q As opposed to having like a specialized task?

21 A Yes.

22 Q What duties did you perform as a front desk
23 agent?

24 A At the front desk you still performed swing
25 duties, occasionally, bar duties, occasionally

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1 --

2 A Yes.

3 Q -- employment with the hotel? But throughout
4 your time as the general manager, you did get pay
5 raises from time to time?

6 A Yes.

7 Q As the general manager on a salary, did you
8 clock in and out?

9 A No.

10 Q People who were on salary, did not clock in
11 and out, right?

12 A No.

13 Q How many employees did the hotel have while
14 you were the general manager on average?

15 A Anywhere between 10 to 13 employees.

16 Q Did they report to you?

17 A Yes.

18 Q I know we talked a little earlier about the
19 recruiting and hiring process that you engaged in.
20 Were you in charge of firing?

21 A Yes.

22 Q Did you terminate anyone while you were at
23 the general manager?

24 A Yes.

25 Q Who did you terminate?

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1 Q What was the purpose of the letter?

2 A I don't remember. I used to do these for a
3 lot of the employees.

4 Q She needed it for some purpose. But you
5 don't recall what purpose she needed it for?

6 A No. Like I don't recall all of them either.

7 Q The letter states in her position as lead
8 front desk agent, her rate of pay is \$800 salary for 40
9 hours per week?

10 A That's correct.

11 Q Hazel was a salaried employee, right?

12 A She started as hourly, then was moved to
13 salary.

14 Q Did the hotel pay overtime to employees that
15 were on salary?

16 A No.

17 Q Was Hazel the only lead front desk agent?

18 A Yes.

19 Q Did she have more responsibility than other
20 front desk agents?

21 A Yes.

22 Q What additional responsibility did she have
23 compared to non-lead front desk agents?

24 A She would cover shifts, work down at the bar
25 sometimes, do the swing shift.

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1 Q Did other front desk agents report to her?

2 A Not really. The only other front desk agent
3 was Akari.

4 Q But Akari as a non-lead would report to the
5 lead or they were the lead was supervising them?

6 A Kind of.

7 Q As the lead front desk agent, did she have
8 more authority than a non-lead front desk agent?

9 A I don't even know how to answer that.

10 Q In other words, could she make more decisions
11 without having to seek your approval?

12 A The only decision she would be allowed to
13 make is do we move this lamp from here to here?

14 Q But she could do those kinds of things
15 without running it by you?

16 A If it's moving furniture. Sure.

17 Q I am handing you what we'll mark as Exhibit
18 Number 11, which is a chart titled, Casa Morada
19 Employee Pay Bates Stamp Defendant 822.

20 (Thereupon, Defendant's Exhibit 11 was
21 entered into the record.)

22 BY MR. NARULA:

23 Q Do you recognize it?

24 A Yes.

25 Q What is it?

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1 Q How many hours did Hazel work each week?

2 A More than the 40.

3 Q How much more?

4 A I don't know.

5 Q Well, if you weren't keeping the time, how do
6 you know she worked more than the 40?

7 A Because we were there most of the time. And
8 again, covering shifts.

9 Q When you say covering shifts, you're talking
10 about Hazel covering someone else's shift?

11 A Um-hum.

12 Q Who's -- yes?

13 A Yeah.

14 Q Whose shift was she going?

15 A Sometimes bar, sometimes she would help me
16 out with laundry. It just depended on what was needed
17 that day.

18 Q She wouldn't exceed 40 hours every week, did
19 she?

20 A For the most part.

21 Q But not every week, right?

22 A Maybe.

23 Q Even though Hazel was a salaried employee,
24 did Hazel request you to pay her overtime?

25 A No. That was supposed to be given as a part-

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1 Q Was Akari paid overtime?

2 A Yes.

3 Q Did he ever exceed 40 hours a week?

4 A Sometimes.

5 Q Did Akari request to be paid overtime?

6 A No. It was one of those you did overtime,
7 I'm going to fight for it and pay you the overtime.

8 Q Did he have to fight for it or did he get
9 just get paid it?

10 A I fought for him.

11 Q So, Akari got paid overtime because you
12 fought for it, right?

13 A Yes.

14 Q So, as far as you're concerned, he doesn't
15 have any unpaid overtime?

16 A Not that I'm aware of.

17 Q Do you aware if Akari ever being retaliated
18 against because he made a request for overtime pay?

19 A I don't know.

20 Q And it's okay if you don't know. I just need
21 to ask these questions. Did you -- did Akari ever get
22 terminated when he was on the job because he requested
23 overtime?

24 A No, not that I know of. I don't know.

25 Q Did Akari ever get demoted when he was at the

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1 was access to the reservation system."

2 A Yes.

3 Q When did you give Hazel a laptop?

4 A At some point in time when she was working
5 there.

6 Q Don't know around when?

7 A I don't remember when.

8 Q Did Mr. Cosa know that you did that?

9 A I don't remember, honestly.

10 Q Which laptop was it?

11 A It was an old laptop. I think it was an HP or
12 Dell.

13 Q Do you remember the color?

14 A Gray.

15 Q What work did Hazel perform from who?

16 A She did e-mail blasts, also booked for events
17 and things like that.

18 Q Was she the event coordinator as well as the
19 front desk manager?

20 A Yes. She handled most weddings, events and
21 some of the social media stuff.

22 Q So, she worked on the hotel, social media
23 accounts?

24 A Yeah. We all did, but yes, she did as well.

25 Q What work would you perform on the social

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1 Morada computer. I think O'Neale -- excuse me, I
2 informed O'Neale where the spreadsheets that contained
3 the employee hours were and how to access them.
4 Earlier, I think you said Hazel did not clock in and
5 out."

6 A In the beginning she did because she was
7 hourly.

8 Q Only for that period of time that she was
9 hourly?

10 A She did for a little while after that, but
11 after a while people stopped.

12 Q Akari clocked in and out?

13 A Yes.

14 Q I'm handing you what we'll mark as Exhibit
15 Number 12.

16 (Thereupon, Defendant's Exhibit 12 was
17 entered into the record.)

18 BY MR. NARULA:

19 Q Which is bearing Bates stamp Defendant 13
20 through 18 -- sorry, 13 through 17.

21 MS. NIWOROWSKI: Thank you.

22 BY MR. NARULA:

23 Q Is this an example of a time card Akari used?

24 A Yeah.

25 Q How many timecards would an employee have

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1 Q When did the clock break?

2 A Oh, it's been broken since I've been working
3 there.

4 Q When you say broken, you mean it doesn't work
5 all the time?

6 A It doesn't work consistently.

7 Q Right.

8 A Yeah.

9 Q Okay. And did -- were you able to fix it
10 when that happened or did you call to get something to
11 fix it?

12 A No, eventually we had to get another and that
13 one broke. So, I don't know. I've tried calling
14 people, we tried purchasing other ones. They just
15 don't last this company.

16 Q Right. It's just not anything nefarious on
17 behalf of the hotel, just that these things are poor
18 quality?

19 A No, the time cards were awful.

20 Q Okay. And when they did malfunction, effort
21 was made to fix them or replace them or?

22 A Yes. We tried several times to fix, because
23 they're expensive on top of everything.

24 Q Based on these time cards, you documented
25 hours on a spreadsheet, right?

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1 A Yes.

2 Q Which hotel computer did you use?

3 A Front desk, but it was on the Cloud, so it
4 could really be used at any of the computers.

5 Q So, you prepared the spreadsheet on the front
6 desk computer, but it was saved on the Cloud?

7 A It's saved on the Cloud.

8 Q It wasn't like you were saving in the hard
9 drive on that computer?

10 A Right.

11 Q And what platform would you use for example,
12 Dropbox or Google Drive?

13 A Microsoft. It was -- oh man, Microsoft, the
14 Cloud. I can't remember. When you go onto like Gmail
15 and stuff and you sign into.

16 Q Is it called Edge or something?

17 A No, Edge is or was, I don't think they are
18 still the company that would work with the servers and
19 things like that for Casa Morada.

20 Q Okay. So, it was a Microsoft based Cloud
21 system?

22 A Right.

23 Q Who had access to that file?

24 A Mine was password saved while I was there.
25 So, nobody else would have access to that file. They

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1 Q When you prepared the spreadsheet?

2 A Um-hum.

3 Q And it was saved on the Cloud?

4 A Um-hum.

5 Q Did you e-mail it to anybody?

6 A O'Neale got the hours when he asked for
7 hours, he got the full amount for how much everybody
8 was getting paid and how much that pay roll was.

9 Q But when you say O'Neale got the hours, how
10 would he get them? Did you --

11 A E-mail.

12 Q -- did you take this Excel spreadsheet --

13 A -- an e-mail --

14 Q -- and attach it to an e-mail and send it to
15 him, correct?

16 A Yes.

17 Q You're shaking your head. I just want --

18 A Yes.

19 Q -- for the record. You would send him that
20 spreadsheet every pay period, which is every two weeks?

21 A Every two weeks.

22 Q Who -- is there anyone else copied?

23 A No, I think a few times towards the end Yazan
24 was copied in it. But I think that was because he was
25 going to be taking over some of the stuff. So, he was

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1 to documents stored in the back office?

2 A Not that I can think of.

3 Q You never destroyed or threw out any
4 timecards for hotel employees specifically to evade a
5 lawsuit or government investigation, did you?

6 A No.

7 Q There may have been a time when you threw
8 away general company documents, but it had nothing to
9 do with a lawsuit or investigation, right?

10 A Nothing to do with a lawsuit or
11 investigation.

12 Q This was around the time of COVID?

13 A Yes.

14 Q That was well before Akari and Hazel ever
15 started working at the hotel, right?

16 A Yes.

17 Q And you can't remember specifically what was
18 thrown out?

19 A Everything was thrown out. Employee files,
20 audits, seven years worth of documents were thrown out.

21 Q They were thrown out due to their age?

22 A No. Just because he didn't want to pay for
23 storage.

24 Q Where were they stored?

25 A In the house across the street that we used

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1 to rent for storage. We'd also have people's boats
2 there.

3 Q So, there was a house across the street.

4 A Right across the street, there's a little
5 house. Half of it was like our laundry room where we
6 would do laundry. Then there was storage for our
7 additional like lamps and stuff so we didn't have to go
8 out and purchase. Because it's very difficult in the
9 keys, furniture. All of our files, everything was kept
10 in that house.

11 Q Was this house rented by the hotel?

12 A Yes.

13 Q How many -- how much approximately? What's
14 the square footage of this house?

15 A I don't know.

16 Q Okay. So, it wasn't for some nefarious
17 purpose that Oneal asked you to get rid of the
18 documents, he just didn't want to pay for the storage,
19 right?

20 A He didn't want to pay for storage. Correct.

21 Q I'm showing you what we'll mark as Exhibit
22 Number 13, which is the hotel employee schedule for
23 2023 bearing Bates Defendant 843 through 899.

24 (Thereupon, Defendant's Exhibit 13 was
25 entered into the record.)

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1 BY MR. NARULA:

2 Q Do you recognize this?

3 A Yes.

4 Q What is it?

5 A Schedule?

6 Q Did you prepare it?

7 A Yes.

8 Q If you turn to Page 873, this is the week for
9 July 31st to August 6th, correct?

10 A Yes.

11 Q Do you see Hazel and Akari in the top left
12 hand corner on the employee list?

13 A Yeah.

14 Q By each of their names there's an a.m. and a
15 p.m., right?

16 A Yes, correct.

17 Q The a.m. based on the legend to the right
18 means that the employee will work the front desk from
19 07:00 a.m. to 03:00 p.m., right?

20 A Yes.

21 Q And the p.m. means that the employee will
22 work the front desk from 03:00 p.m. to 09:00 p.m.,
23 right?

24 A That's correct.

25 Q Were copies of this schedule posted for

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1 employees to view on property?

2 A Yes.

3 Q Where?

4 A Right by the time clock.

5 Q Were they e-mailed to the employees?

6 A No.

7 Q So, what would the employees do, let go and
8 take a picture of it?

9 A Um-hum.

10 Q Yes?

11 A Yes. And for housekeeping, I would take a
12 picture and send it to them.

13 Q But for Hazel and Akari, they would be
14 responsible for seeing the chart, the schedule, and
15 then taking a picture of it or writing down the record.
16 And --

17 A It was like that for everybody. Housekeeping
18 only got it sent to them so that they could let me
19 know, no, I need this day off or I need that day off.
20 The same was asked to Hazel and Akari, do you need any
21 certain days off? Could I have this day off? Could
22 you work this day for me?

23 Q And the schedule that I've shown you, which
24 is Exhibit 13, what accurately reflects the time work?

25 A Yeah.

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1 Q Okay. I'm handing you what we'll mark as
2 Exhibit Number 14.

3 (Thereupon, Defendant's Exhibit 14 was
4 entered into the record.)

5 BY MR. NARULA:

6 Q Which is a hotel payroll spreadsheet for 2023
7 bearing Bates Defendant 900 through 928.

8 MS. NIWOROWSKI: Thank you.

9 BY MR. NARULA:

10 Q Do you recognize it?

11 A Yes.

12 Q What is it?

13 A It looks like my spreadsheet.

14 Q This was the spreadsheet we were talking
15 about earlier that you aggregated the data that you
16 collected from the timecards?

17 A Um-hum.

18 Q Yes?

19 A Yes, those are the hours.

20 Q Did you prepare this?

21 A Yes.

22 Q This is the one that you --

23 A Possibly, yes.

24 Q This is the one that you prepared on the
25 front desk computer that was saved on the Cloud that

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1 you e-mailed to Mr. Cosa?

2 A Yes.

3 Q This information would've matched the
4 information, the data on the timecards, right?

5 A Yes.

6 Q So, even if the timecards don't exist any
7 longer, this payroll spreadsheet memorializes the time
8 what --

9 A Should be by --

10 Q -- by the employees.

11 A Yes.

12 Q The employees with the names highlighted in
13 yellow were paid through paymaster and online portal,
14 right?

15 A Paymaster, ADP, whichever one it was that
16 time.

17 Q Do you remember in 2023 what you were using?

18 A I'm going to say Paymaster.

19 Q Okay. And the employees below that without
20 their name highlighted and receive checks, right?

21 A Correct.

22 Q If you look at Page 912, this is for the pay
23 period June 12th through 25.

24 A Yes.

25 Q Hazel started making \$18 an hour, right?

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1 A Correct.

2 Q If you look at Page 917, it's for the pay
3 period, August 21st, September -- through September
4 3rd, Hazel was converted to a salary of \$1,600, right?

5 A Yes.

6 Q That's the same pay period that Akari started
7 working there at the hotel, right?

8 A Um-hum.

9 Q Yes?

10 A I think so.

11 Q He was making \$18 an hour, right?

12 A Yes.

13 Q If you look at Page 920, which is the pay
14 period, October 2nd through 15, Akari worked 93.49
15 hours, right?

16 A Yes.

17 Q So, for 13.49 of those hours, which is the
18 amount above and beyond 80, he got paid a rate of \$21
19 an hour, right?

20 A Correct.

21 Q He also received \$95 in tips, right?

22 A Yes.

23 Q On Page 924, November 27th through December
24 10th, Akari worked 82.3 hours and 2.3 of those hours,
25 which is the amount above and beyond 80, he got paid at

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1 the overtime rate, right?

2 A Yes.

3 Q On Page 925 for the pay period, December 11th
4 through 24, you were on vacation, right?

5 A I believe so. I don't remember.

6 Q You see here it says under your name,
7 reimbursed, it says \$800 remaining week of vacation?

8 A Oh, yes. So, this was December 24th. I was
9 being reimbursed for the vacation I did not take and I
10 left on the 23rd.

11 Q So, you were or were not there?

12 A 23rd was my last day. December 24th is the
13 last day of this pay period.

14 Q So, you were -- it's not that you were on
15 vacation, you were being reimbursed?

16 A Yes.

17 Q Where the vacation didn't take?

18 A Correct.

19 Q Okay. This was the last pay period that
20 Hazel and Akari work, correct?

21 A Correct.

22 Q Hazel received a salary of \$1,600 plus a
23 payment of \$1,000, right?

24 A Yes.

25 Q Hazel demanded an additional \$1,000 at the

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1 time she quit, didn't she?

2 A I don't remember.

3 Q Did you calculate the amount that she was
4 owed?

5 A Possibly.

6 Q Was it for an overtime pay?

7 A I don't remember what it was for exactly. I
8 just know that I was told to pay the \$1,000 as opposed
9 to whatever else was the amount that was being
10 requested.

11 Q Why would she get a thousand dollars extra
12 above and beyond her salary?

13 A I don't remember.

14 Q Did she sign any kind of release of claims
15 because she got paid more than what she was owed?

16 A No, this wasn't like a normal place.

17 Q Is there a coincidence by the fact that you
18 left at the same time Hazel and Akari left the
19 employment of the hotel?

20 A No.

21 Q I mean another -- so, there -- it's not a
22 coincidence. You -- there's no reason that --

23 A They left before I left.

24 Q Okay.

25 A They were aware that I was going to leave.

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1 race?

2 A No.

3 Q You didn't treat Hazel any differently
4 because of race, did you?

5 A No.

6 Q Did you ever witness anyone at the hotel
7 treat Hazel differently or unfairly because of her
8 race?

9 A No.

10 Q Are you aware of any instance where the hotel
11 retaliated against Hazel because she complained about
12 being the victim of racial discrimination?

13 A No.

14 Q Akari and Hazel quit their jobs, right?

15 A Yes.

16 Q Page -- excuse me, Paragraph 22 of the
17 declaration states, "O'Neale fails to take
18 accountability for his actions or for Casa Morada and
19 routinely throws his employees under the bus when
20 things go wrong." What did you mean by O'Neale fails
21 to take accountability for his actions?

22 A For example, the e-mail that Sara sent, I'll
23 use that one. He was complaining that we were not on
24 booking.com and Expedia and not getting the bookings
25 when brought to his attention that was due to his

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1 Q Around that time that you lost or the hotel
2 lost the storage house and those documents were
3 destroyed. Can you give me an approximate timeframe?

4 A Of when they were -- when we lost the place?

5 Q Correct.

6 A That was in 2020 around November-ish.

7 Q Had you ever been to that storage house?

8 A Yes, everybody had.

9 Q About how often would you go there?

10 A Every day, at least four or five times a day.
11 Mostly because laundry was attached there and if we
12 needed things for the hotel, that's where we would
13 store it.

14 Q So, you saw specifically what was being
15 stored in that storage house?

16 A Yes.

17 Q And when were those documents destroyed?

18 A Same time in November, we had to be out of
19 there.

20 Q Do you know if the documents that were
21 destroyed included clock in and clock out records for
22 the employees of the hotel?

23 A Yes.

24 Q Do you know if that included time records of
25 current employees of the hotel?

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1 A I would put the hours into the spreadsheet
2 when I was done with the time cards. They'd get rubber
3 banded and put into a banker's box.

4 Q Earlier, you mentioned that the time clock
5 was broken or would have issues. Did you ever bring
6 that issue up to O'Neale Cosa?

7 A Yes.

8 Q Do you remember about when you brought that
9 up to him?

10 A Several times. I don't have like an exact
11 time.

12 Q Several times during the course of Akari and
13 Hazel's employment?

14 A During the course of my entire seven years
15 there.

16 Q Including when Akari and Hazel were working
17 there?

18 A Yes.

19 Q Was Hazel required to punch in and out in the
20 time of clock?

21 MR. NARULA: Object to form.

22 A When she was hourly.

23 BY MR. LAROU:

24 Q And then when she was switched over to salary
25 pay, she was no longer required to punch in and out?

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1 A Correct.

2 Q And would you store Hazel's time cards in the
3 banker's box as well?

4 A When she punched in and out, yes.

5 Q Okay. Next, I want to take a look at
6 Defendant's Exhibit 14 and specifically I want to start
7 Page Number 917. Okay. So, actually, let's look at 917,
8 918, and 919. It looks like on each of these pay
9 periods Akari was paid for 80 hours on the dot. Is that
10 because Akari worked exactly 80 hours during those pay
11 periods or because that's just the amount he would be
12 paid?

13 A I believe it was because that's what he
14 worked on was pay periods.

15 Q And the next page Bates marked Defendant's
16 920. It looks like -- paid -- hours at a rate of \$18
17 per hour. And then he was also paid for 13.49 hours at
18 a rate of \$21 per hour. Can you tell me why he was paid
19 at a rate of \$21 per hour for some of those hours?

20 A I don't remember honestly, but those were the
21 hours that he did over the 80 --

22 Q Do you know who decided to pay him at a rate
23 of \$21 an hour for some of those hours?

24 A No, I don't remember.

25 Q Did you have the authority to determine

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CERTIFICATE OF OATH

I, KHALED ELMOUSSA, Court Reporter, Notary Public,
State of Florida, certify that AILEEN GONZALEZ personally
appeared before me on the 17th day of June, 2025, and was
duly sworn

Signed this 24th day of June 2025.

Khaled Elmoussa

KHALED ELMOUSSA, Court Reporter
Notary Public, State of Florida
Commission No. HH 566837
Commission Expires: 6/30/28

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CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

I, KHALED ELMOUSSA, Court Reporter, certify that I was authorized to and did report the Deposition of AILEEN GONZALEZ; that a review of the transcript was requested; and that the transcript is a true and correct record of my notes.

I further certify that I am not a relative, employee, attorney, or counsel of any of the parties, nor am I a relative or employee of any of the parties, attorneys or counsel connected with the action, nor am I financially interested in the action.

Dated this 24th day of June 2025.

Khaled Elmoussa

KHALED ELMOUSSA, Court Reporter